

# Kentucky Adult Education Profile



## What is Kentucky Adult Education?

The mission of Kentucky Adult Education (KYAE) is to raise the educational levels of more than one million Kentucky adults with low literacy skills and to assist the nearly 786,000 adults who do not have a high school credential to earn a GED. KYAE's goal is to help these adults gain the academic skills and credential they need to function productively in the workplace, support themselves and their families and make positive contributions to society and the economy. A local adult education program in every county provides academic instruction in reading, writing, math, science and social studies to help adults improve their literacy skills, earn a GED, prepare for college and employment and learn English as a second language.

## Why is adult education important?

For Kentucky to continue its economic growth, more adults must acquire the skills that prepare them for success in employment and postsecondary education. On average, individuals with a high school diploma or GED earn almost \$8,000 more a year in wages than non-graduates. The potential increased earnings for the 9,007 GED graduates in 2006 will be more than \$1.4 billion over a 20-year period. (Source: Mortensen's "Postsecondary Education Opportunity" median earnings in 2004 (U.S.)) Higher earnings make a significant contribution to the Commonwealth's economy and a considerable improvement in the quality of life for Kentucky families.

## What is Kentucky's challenge?

In 2004, 26 percent of Kentucky jobs required some postsecondary education. By 2014, the percentage of Kentucky jobs requiring some postsecondary education is projected to increase to 28 percent, including 36 percent of all new jobs. (Source: Kentucky Occupational Outlook to 2014, Office of Employment and Training, Education Cabinet, 2006) Given the number of Kentuckians without basic literacy skills or credentials to succeed in postsecondary education or new economy jobs, adult education is crucial in helping Kentucky meet the challenge of an underprepared workforce.

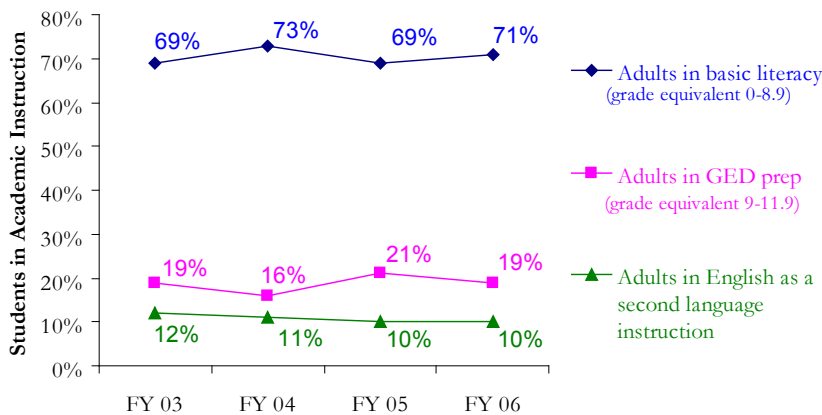
Many Kentucky adults do not have literacy skills necessary to effectively comprehend and use written materials for everyday activities:

- 42 percent have difficulty reading or understanding materials such as newspapers;
- 34 percent have limited ability to interpret drug and food labels or complete job applications;
- 55 percent have problems with tasks that require using numbers embedded in printed materials, such as completing an order form or balancing a checkbook. (Source: State Assessment of Adult Literacy Survey, 2003)

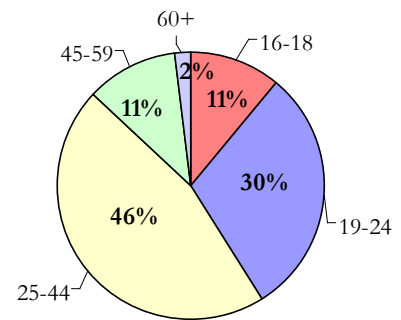
For the Commonwealth to be competitive in regional, national and international economies, no Kentuckian can be left out of efforts to prepare a skilled workforce and to improve the quality of life in Kentucky. More adults need higher academic and literacy skills, more need GEDs and more GED graduates must transition to college.

# How is Kentucky Adult Education answering the challenge?

## STUDENTS IN ACADEMIC INSTRUCTION



### Students in Academic Instruction by Age FY 2006

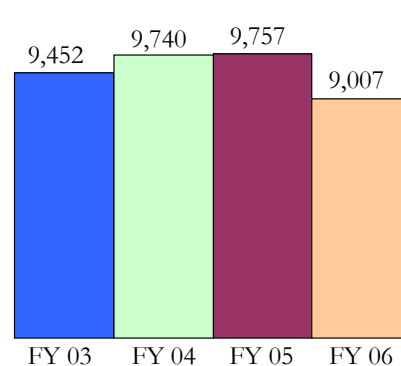


- Of students enrolled in academic instruction in 2006, 71 percent tested below the ninth-grade level upon enrollment. The remaining students were in GED preparation (grade level 9-11.9) or English as a second language instruction.

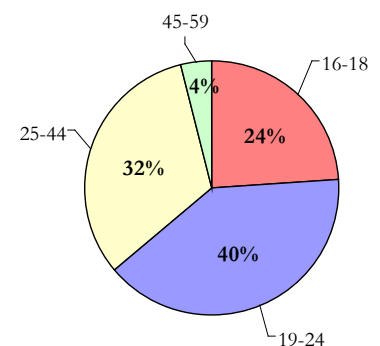
## STUDENTS EARNING A GED

- In six years, nearly 70,000 Kentuckians earned a GED, ranking Kentucky 13th highest nationally in the percentage of non-high school completers earning a GED.
- In 2006, 75 percent of Kentuckians who took the GED Tests passed.
- As part of the Council on Postsecondary Education's 2020 goals, KYAE has set a goal of reaching 15,000 GEDs annually by 2020.

### GEDs Awarded



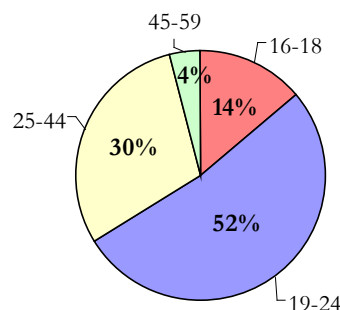
### GEDs Awarded by Age FY 2006



## TRANSITIONING TO POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION

- As part of the Council on Postsecondary Education's 2020 goals, KYAE has set a goal of increasing the college-going rate of GED graduates to 36 percent by 2020.
- Of those who enrolled in postsecondary education by fall 2006:
  - 86% enrolled in a KCTCS college
  - 12% enrolled in a public four-year institution
  - 2% enrolled in an independent institution

### Students by Age Who Transitioned by FY 2006



### GED Graduates Enrolling in Kentucky's Colleges and Universities Within Two Academic Years

